



Commission to Review and Advise on Services to At Risk
Adolescent Youth in New Hampshire
Final Report
November 17, 2016

Produced for Governor Margaret Wood Hassan
In compliance with Executive Order 2014-8

Comments should be submitted to:
Amy Kennedy, Office of the Governor
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I. Report per Executive Order 2014-8

The Commission to Review and Advise on Services to At Risk Adolescent Youth in New Hampshire (“Commission”), as established by executive Order 2014-8 (see Appendix), must submit a report to the Governor, the Commissioner of Health and Human Services, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate on or before the anniversary of the first meeting. On February 12, 2016, the Commission submitted an interim report (see Appendix) to satisfy that requirement, as the work of the Commission was not complete. The Commissioner requested additional time to complete the duties outlined in the Executive Order. This final report satisfies that request.

The Commission met on the following dates:

- February 6, 2015
- March 6, 2015
- April 10, 2015
- May 15, 2015
- June 12, 2015
- July 10, 2015
- August 14, 2015
- September 11, 2015
- October 9, 2015
- November 13, 2015
- December 11, 2015
- January 29, 2016
- March 11, 2016
- July 8, 2016
- August 12, 2016
- October 14, 2016

All agendas, minutes, and materials of the Commission dating from February 6, 2015 to present are posted on Governor Hassan’s web page:

<http://governor.nh.gov/commissions-task-forces/adolescent-youth/index.htm>

II. Commission Membership

In accordance with the Governor’s Executive Order, the membership of the Commission represents Executive and Legislative branches of state government, as well as representation from potential points of service within a juvenile’s life. The membership brings together a wealth of knowledge and expertise that can provide recommendations to policy makers with a full array of national, state, and local knowledge to best serve youth in New Hampshire.

Members of the Commission (current members at time of report) and representation:

- Mike Adamkowski, Chair – Member of the Division of Children Youth and Families Advisory Board
- Representative Betsy McKinney – Member of the House Finance Committee
- Representative Debra Desimone – Member of the House Children & Family Law Committee
- Michele Harlan –NH Bureau of Behavioral Health
- Mary Steady – NH Department of Education designee
- Judge James M. Carroll – Circuit Court
- David Dionne – Superintendent of County Correctional Facility
- Karen Crowley – Employee of Sununu Youth Services Center
- Martha Kane – Juvenile Probation and Parole
- Michael Skibbie – Attorney Specializing in Juvenile Justice
- Nicole Rodler – Juvenile Diversion Program
- Jeffrey Meyers, Ex Officio – Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services
- Maureen Ryan, Ex Officio – Commissioner appointee

Note: The New Hampshire Senate did not appoint a member during the Commission's tenure.

Former Members:

- Nick Toumpas –Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services
- Mary Ann Cooney – NH Department of Health and Human Services
- Geoffrey Souther – NH Bureau of Behavioral Health
- Evelyn Clark Smith – Employee of Sununu Youth Services Center
- Karen Purse – Parent of child who has received services

Staff of the NH Department of Health and Human Services provided exemplary support to the Commission.

III. Presentations to Commission

The Commission reviewed all nine points of contact along the juvenile justice system, with presentations on the following topics:

- Overview of the Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC)
- Overview of the NH Division of Children Youth and Families
- Diversion Services in New Hampshire
- Juvenile Justice Field Services
- Data and Outcomes on Juvenile Justice Services
- SYSC Report by the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators
- Cost of Services for 17 Year Olds
- SYSC Census
- Community Based Provider Rates
- Providers Associations: Gaps in System

IV. Recommendations

The majority¹ of the Commission accepted the following recommendations to most effectively create system transformation of juvenile justice services in New Hampshire:

1. The State should determine the true cost of operating the Sununu Youth Services Center (SYSC). This cost should separate out the cost of care and treatment of residents from the cost of maintaining non-essential buildings and facilities. Currently Division of Children Youth and Families (DCYF) administrative offices, Manchester Mounted Patrol and NH State Police use the SYSC facility and the costs associated are under the existing SYSC budget.
2. When the true cost of operating SYSC has been determined the State should evaluate the current model and modify it in the most cost effective way. Currently the existing budget does not allow for assuring there will be sufficient operational resources to support the supervision, residential treatment and rehabilitative needs of the high risk youth who require the level of secure care provided at the SYSC.
3. The State should review the current eligibility guidelines for commitment to the John H. Sununu Youth Services Center (New Hampshire's youth development center), evaluate its effectiveness and make recommendations for further use or change. Currently the tool is over ridden by judges at a high rate.
4. The State should evaluate the current array of community based and residential treatment services and adapt to the current population being served. Currently there are a high number of youth placed out of state indicating gaps in the in-state service array.
5. The State should develop annual outcome measures to help monitor service effectiveness. All service providers including SYSC should submit them to the Division Director of the Division of Children Youth and Families and the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services for review. Currently there are limited outcome measures available.
6. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and DCYF be authorized flexibility in adjusting services, treatment modalities and rates to be responsive to the needs of the population being served. Currently adjusting rate setting is not allowed due to House Bill 2 (FY 2016-2017). This limits providers adjusting services for a new evidenced based treatment or working with a new area of need.
7. The State should provide guidance on establishing model provisions on Memorandums of Understandings to the Department of Education and Law Enforcement on the use of School Resource Officers and Truant Officers. Currently there is a risk of students entering the juvenile justice system due to behavioral issues.

¹ Active members voted in support except for Mr. Michael Skibbie and Rep. Betsy McKinney who abstained.

Appendix:

Executive Order 2014-8

Interim Report

Letter to Governor